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7 REAPPORTIONMENT PUBLIC HEARING  
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10 AUGUST 28, 2001 - 1:30 P.M.

11 LAKELAND CENTER

12 LAKELAND, FLORIDA  
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18 REPORTED BY:

19 KRISTEN L. BENTLEY, COURT REPORTER

20 Division of Administrative Hearings

21 DeSoto Building

22 1230 Apalachee Parkway

23 Tallahassee, Florida  
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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p> <p>1 MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE</p> <p>2 SENATOR GINNY BROWN-WAITE</p> <p>3 SENATOR WALTER G. CAMPBELL, JR.</p> <p>4 SENATOR LEE CONSTANTINE</p> <p>5 SENATOR ANNA P. COWIN</p> <p>6 SENATOR JOHN F. LAURENT</p> <p>7 SENATOR DANIEL WEBSTER</p> <p>8 REPRESENTATIVE JD ALEXANDER</p> <p>9 REPRESENTATIVE RANDY JOHN BALL</p> <p>10 REPRESENTATIVE FREDERICK C. BRUMMER</p> <p>11 REPRESENTATIVE JOHNNIE B. BYRD, JR.</p> <p>12 REPRESENTATIVE LARRY CROW</p> <p>13 REPRESENTATIVE JOYCE CUSACK</p> <p>14 REPRESENTATIVE DONNA CLARKE</p> <p>15 REPRESENTATIVE MARIO DIAZ-BALART</p> <p>16 REPRESENTATIVE PAULA BONO DOCKERY</p> <p>17 REPRESENTATIVE MIKE FASANO</p> <p>18 REPRESENTATIVE BRUCE KYLE</p> <p>19 REPRESENTATIVE SANDRA L. MURMAN</p> <p>20 REPRESENTATIVE MITCH NEEDELMAN</p> <p>21 REPRESENTATIVE LESLIE WATERS</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p> <p>1 committee meeting and we will not take up legislative</p> <p>2 action in this or any subsequent committee meetings.</p> <p>3 Instead, this is the public's forum where we will have</p> <p>4 the opportunity to receive citizen input about their</p> <p>5 electoral districts. It is not a time for legislative</p> <p>6 debate. All the Representatives and Senators will have</p> <p>7 numerous opportunities in subsequent hearings and floor</p> <p>8 debates to address their concerns and wishes. Today,</p> <p>9 however, is for our constituents and we must not diminish</p> <p>10 your voice by taking up your valuable time today with</p> <p>11 debate.</p> <p>12 Following my remarks, our legal counsel will give a</p> <p>13 general overview of the legal considerations in</p> <p>14 redistricting. Then the staff will provide some specific</p> <p>15 information about the census results for this region and</p> <p>16 the state. The rest of the time is reserved for you, the</p> <p>17 citizens.</p> <p>18 Every ten years after the completion of the national</p> <p>19 census the Constitution requires that the Florida</p> <p>20 Legislature redraw boundaries of all the districts of the</p> <p>21 Florida House of Representatives, the Florida Senate, and</p> <p>22 Florida's congressional districts. The Legislature will</p> <p>23 take up this task in the next legislative session beginning</p> <p>24 January the 22nd, 2002 and ending on March 22nd, 2002.</p> <p>25 The districts we draw will first be used in the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p> <p>1 PROCEEDINGS</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN WEBSTER: Good afternoon. My name is Daniel</p> <p>3 Webster. I'm a Senator from District 12 over in Orlando</p> <p>4 and chairman of the Senate Redistricting Committee. It's</p> <p>5 my pleasure to welcome you to this public hearing.</p> <p>6 Representatives and Senators are here to listen to the</p> <p>7 residents of this area, consider your input important</p> <p>8 because it's very important to the process.</p> <p>9 Since these are joint meetings, we have divided our</p> <p>10 responsibilities throughout the many public hearings we'll</p> <p>11 be holding around the state and throughout the next several</p> <p>12 months. It's my pleasure at this time to introduce</p> <p>13 Representative Johnnie Byrd who is chairman of the House</p> <p>14 Procedural and Redistricting Council. Chairman Byrd will</p> <p>15 preside over today's meeting. Chairman Byrd.</p> <p>16 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you, Senator Webster. I serve</p> <p>17 as the State Representative from District 62 in Plant City</p> <p>18 and I'm also the chairman of Procedural and Redistricting</p> <p>19 Council. It's my pleasure to welcome you to this public</p> <p>20 hearing. It's one of over 20 to be held throughout the</p> <p>21 state of Florida this summer and fall. Let me first</p> <p>22 explain the procedure that we will use throughout these</p> <p>23 public hearings. And this is a public hearing, the sole</p> <p>24 and only purpose of which is to hear from the public on</p> <p>25 matters of redistricting. This is not a legislative</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p> <p>1 elections in the fall of 2002. Redistricting is an</p> <p>2 essential element of our representative democracy. We take</p> <p>3 this on with humility and due regard for the importance and</p> <p>4 difficulty of the job. We have made the commitment that we</p> <p>5 will have a process that will be fair, open, and inclusive.</p> <p>6 These public hearings represent a crucial first step</p> <p>7 in this process. We appreciate that we are doing the work</p> <p>8 of the people and want to hear from you and help you</p> <p>9 participate in a meaningful way. To encourage public</p> <p>10 participation, House Speaker Tom Feeney and Senate</p> <p>11 president John McKay have scheduled these public hearings.</p> <p>12 All members of the Legislature's redistricting</p> <p>13 committees as well as local delegation members have been</p> <p>14 invited to these public hearings. These hearings will be</p> <p>15 taped so they can also be made available to all members of</p> <p>16 the Legislature.</p> <p>17 The House and the Senate have designed web sites as a</p> <p>18 tool for public input and we will also broadcast select</p> <p>19 hearings on Florida's public television stations. The web</p> <p>20 addresses for the House and Senate legislative</p> <p>21 redistricting are in at the sign-in table. There is also a</p> <p>22 link available from the Florida legislative web site.</p> <p>23 The redistricting plan for the State and House will be</p> <p>24 passed in the form of a joint resolution which will not be</p> <p>25 subject to the Governor's approval or veto but will be</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p> <p>1 reviewed by the Florida Supreme Court. On the other hand,  2 the plan determining congressional districts will not be  3 reviewed by the Florida Supreme Court but will be subject  4 to the Governor's approval or veto.</p> <p>5 I would also encourage each of you to carefully review  6 the 2000 census data. It is the essential building block  7 on which Florida's redistricting plans will be built.  8 United States' census web site is also available at the  9 sign-in table. We are here to listen and to consider your  10 voice. We encourage each member of the public to testify  11 and to help us craft your legislative districts. We also  12 encourage written submission in addition to the testimony  13 during the public hearing.</p> <p>14 Everyone who wishes to speak must make sure to fill  15 out a speaker's card. That's the only way we will know who  16 wishes to speak, and after the hearing, who did speak.  17 Speaker's cards are also available at the sign-in table.  18 In addition, because we want to hear from as many people as  19 possible, we must limit your comments to four minutes.  20 But, again, you can submit written submissions if four  21 minutes is not enough.</p> <p>22 On behalf of House Speaker Tom Feeney, Senate  23 President John McKay and the members of the Florida  24 Legislature, I look forward to working with all of you on  25 this historic and important task. At this time I would</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p> <p>1 seats. Therefore, with regards to congressional  2 districting the State Legislature will need to create 25  3 separate, contiguous districts to cover the entire state,  4 one for each member of the congressional delegation.</p> <p>5 The Florida Legislature will also need to divide the  6 state into 40 State Senatorial districts and 120 State  7 House of Representative districts. Although the  8 Legislature may, if it chose, reduce the number of State,  9 Senate, and House districts to as low as 30 and 80  10 respectively.</p> <p>11 Florida Constitution also requires that the State and  12 Senate districts be consecutively numbered in either  13 contiguous, overlapping, or identical territory.  14 Legislative committees will convene this fall. And  15 beginning in January, the fall Legislature will begin the  16 process of reviewing and developing districting plans. The  17 regular session ends in March of 2002. Although the  18 legislative process can be concluded in the regular session  19 for redistricting, the Constitution provides additional  20 sessions and review processes in the event the work of the  21 Legislature on redistricting is not done at the end of the  22 regular session.</p> <p>23 For example, the Florida Constitution requires the  24 Governor to reconvene the Legislature in a special session  25 in the event the redistricting plans are not adopted in the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p> <p>1 like to recognize attorney George Meros who is a member of  2 the House legal team to give us a brief legal presentation.  3 You are recognized.</p> <p>4 MR. MEROS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the  5 committee. My name is George Meros and I serve as  6 cocounsel for the House of Representatives on redistricting  7 matters. I'm here together with my colleague, Ed Pazzouli,  8 representing the Florida Senate. I will give you simply a  9 brief overview of the law regarding reapportionment and  10 redistricting for the benefit of the members as well as for  11 the public. This is by no means a comprehensive  12 presentation or a complete review of all the issues but is  13 intended to give simply an introduction to the basic  14 principles and constraints that will guide the Legislature  15 in its task this fall and this winter.</p> <p>16 The task of reapportionment and redistricting is the  17 process of dividing residents of the jurisdiction, in this  18 case, the entire state of Florida, into different electoral  19 seats or districts. Reapportionment and redistricting are  20 both constitutional requirements both as a matter of  21 Florida and Federal Constitutional law. And both require  22 that this process commences every ten years after the most  23 recent census. Because of Florida's population increase  24 over the last ten years, Florida will have two additional  25 members in the United States Congress for a total of 25</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p> <p>1 regular session. That special session shall not exceed 30  2 consecutive days. From here the process becomes a little  3 bit more tedious and technical but let me just go over a  4 few of them.</p> <p>5 If during the regular or special session the  6 reapportionment plans -- or during the regular special  7 session if reapportionment plans are adopted for Congress,  8 the Governor has the opportunity to approve or veto the  9 adopted plan. Under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act,  10 which we will later discuss, the Justice Department of the  11 United States District Court for the District of Columbia  12 must also review certain parts of the plan in a process  13 known as preclearance.</p> <p>14 Now with respect to the State, House, and Senate  15 seats, if the Legislature adopts redistricting plans then  16 15 days after passage the Florida Attorney General is  17 required to petition the Florida Supreme Court for a  18 determination of the validity of the Legislature's plan.  19 If the Florida Supreme Court declares the plan to be  20 invalid, the Constitution mandates that within five days  21 the Governor must reconvene the Legislature in an  22 extraordinary session of no more than 15 days at which  23 session the Legislature will adopt or must adopt a joint  24 resolution conforming to the judgment of the Florida  25 Supreme Court. Assuming the regular and special sessions</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 10</p> <p>1 end without the adoption of a redistricting plan for the  2 State Legislature, the Attorney General must then petition  3 the Florida Supreme Court to commence deliberations on the  4 establishment of a redistricting plan.  5 Within 60 days of that petition the Florida Supreme  6 Court must file an order setting forth a redistricting  7 plan. And as with congressional redistricting, there must  8 be a Section 5 preclearance on selected portions of  9 Florida's plan. In effect, to recap the two processes,  10 with respect to Congressional redistricting: The Governor  11 is in power to sign or veto the bill subject, of course, to  12 a legislative override. With respect to state  13 redistricting, it is the Florida Supreme Court, not the  14 Governor, that will review the plan to determine its  15 validity.  16 Now let's talk a few minutes briefly about certain  17 redistricting principles. Any legislative plan is guided  18 by several factors, one of which is the principle of one  19 person, one vote and the other is the requirements of the  20 United States Constitution and Federal statutes. The  21 principle of one person, one vote was developed from a  22 series of landmark United States Supreme Court cases in the  23 1960s. Generally the principle stands for the proposition  24 that each person's vote should count as much as any others.  25 In the context of redistricting this principle, in</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 12</p> <p>1 United States Constitution. Section 2 of the Voting Rights  2 Act prohibits any practice or procedure including certain  3 redistricting practices that impairs the ability of a  4 minority community to elect candidates of choice on an  5 equal basis with nonminority voters.  6 Another section of the Voting Rights Act, Section 5,  7 applies to limited jurisdictions in Florida 5 relating to  8 the same criteria that I just mentioned. There is,  9 however, a different process of analysis under Section 5.  10 Under Section 5 the covered jurisdictions -- and those  11 jurisdictions in Florida are Collier, Hardy, Hendry,  12 Hillsborough and Monroe Counties. These covered  13 jurisdictions are required to submit any proposed change to  14 their practices or procedures affecting voting which  15 includes redistricting to the Attorney General or the  16 United States District Court for the District of Columbia  17 prior to implementation.  18 The vast majority of preclearance requests are made  19 directly to the United States Attorney General's Office but  20 they do not have to be. Preclearance is obtained if the  21 Attorney General effectively indicates that the office has  22 no objection within 60 days or if it has affirmatively  23 approved the plans. Either -- under either practice in  24 front of the Attorney General or the District Court, the  25 covered jurisdiction bears the burden of proving that the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 11</p> <p>1 earlier years -- or was used to defeat the practice of  2 earlier years where districts were maintained with unequal  3 population so people's votes counted differently depending  4 on where that person resided.  5 The Supreme Court concluded that that was  6 unconstitutional under the Equal Protection Clause and  7 required that there be a general equality of population  8 among legislative districts. For congressional districts,  9 the Court has adopted the strictest possible standard. As  10 a rule of thumb, population among different districts for  11 congressional districts, any deviation should be  12 substantially less than 1 percent overall deviation.  13 Deviation is analyzed based on a concept of the ideal  14 district size. For example, in the case of Florida. If  15 you take the state's total population and divide it by 25  16 congressional seats, the resulting number would be the  17 ideal size for each congressional seat and congressional  18 districts should then be drawn with a disparity in that  19 population of less or no more than 1 percent.  20 For state legislative districts the Courts permitted a  21 greater deviation and the Courts have even accepted  22 differences of up to 10 percent depending upon the  23 particular circumstances in that case.  24 Another important standard to consider is the Voting  25 Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Protection Clause of the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p> <p>1 voting change does not have the purpose and will not have  2 the effect of denying or abridging the right of vote -- the  3 right to vote on account of race or color or membership in  4 a language minority group. The Section 5 analysis is also  5 to some extent called a retrogression analysis.  6 The legal rules, members, regarding redistricting  7 reapportionment are complex and this presentation can only  8 give the briefest of overviews of this. There will be many  9 delicate legal issues that will be dependent upon the  10 particular circumstances as they arise in this process. It  11 is my pleasure to be able to give this presentation to you  12 on behalf of the House legal team as well as the Senate  13 legal team.  14 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you, Attorney Meros. At this  15 time, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to recognize Todd  16 Thomson of the House Redistricting Committee to make a  17 brief presentation with regard to the 2000 census that we  18 will be looking at throughout this process. Mr. Thomson,  19 you are recognized.  20 MR. THOMSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members.  21 Today, I'm going to give a very brief overview of the  22 Florida census on a statewide view and then I'll give some  23 local numbers on some of the Polk County and the  24 surrounding counties as well.  25 Florida's population has grown to almost 16 million</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p> <p>1 according to the 2000 census. This is growth of about  2 3 million people over the 1990 census. Florida grew at a  3 rate of roughly 23 and a half percent. And as a result of  4 this growth Florida gained two new congressional seats for  5 a total of 25.</p> <p>6 Miami-Dade County remains Florida's most populous  7 county. The five most populous counties in Florida are  8 Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Hillsborough and Pinellas.  9 Flagler County experienced the most rapid rate of growth  10 over the past ten years at a rate of 73.6 percent between  11 1990 and 2000. Flagler, Sumpter, Collier, Wakulla and  12 Osceola experienced the greatest rate of growth over the  13 past ten years.</p> <p>14 Jacksonville remains Florida's most populous city. A  15 population of about 735,000. Jacksonville, Miami, Tampa,  16 St. Petersburg and Hialeah are the five most populous  17 cities in the state of Florida. Minority population in the  18 state of Florida, the African-American population statewide  19 is about 13.6 percent in 1990. That has grown now to about  20 14.6 percent. And the Hispanic population has surpassed  21 the African-American population in terms of being the  22 largest minority group in the state of Florida.</p> <p>23 The Hispanic population is now 16.8 percent of  24 Florida's total population. The median age in Florida has  25 risen over the past ten years from 36.3 in 1990 to 38.7 in</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p> <p>1 Highlands County has a population now of 87,366. It's  2 a 27.7 percent increase over the 1990 population.  3 Okeechobee County, 35,910. It's a 21.2 percent increase.  4 DeSoto County, 32,209. It's an increase of 35 percent over  5 1990. You can find all of this information and more on our  6 two web sites which we have sheets at the sign-up desk that  7 have the web site address on them. Thank you,  8 Mr. Chairman.</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Before we get started today, I noticed  10 that the Honorable Adam Putnam, Congressman, is with us.  11 And I'd like to welcome our friend and my former colleague  12 Congressman Putnam. And if you'd like, it would be a real  13 honor if you'd address us for a moment and give us words of  14 wisdom. So you are recognized.</p> <p>15 MR. PUTNAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's an honor  16 to be here with my State Representative and certainly my  17 colleagues. I can tell you after eight months of  18 Washington air to breathe, I have no wisdom left.  19 (Laughter.) It's been a lot of fun to be back together  20 with my good friends from both sides of the aisle in  21 Tallahassee and really I just want to welcome you to  22 imperial Polk County. It's an honor for us to have you  23 here.</p> <p>24 I know that this is a hearing that was added later on  25 which has been added to a very long list of hearings that</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p> <p>1 the year 2000. Age 65-plus, our seniors, are the most  2 important group here in Florida. There are now about 2.8  3 million Floridians aged 65 and above. While this is an  4 increase of over 400,000 since 1990, the overall percentage  5 of the population aged 65 and over has decreased from  6 18.3 percent to 17.6 percent.</p> <p>7 As Mr. Meros touched on, the ideal population per  8 district in the year 2000 for State House would be about  9 133,000. For the State Senate would be about 400,000 and a  10 congressional district will contain about 639,000.</p> <p>11 Now I'm going to give a brief overview for the Polk  12 County area. The city of Lakeland is the largest city in  13 Polk County. And according to the 2000 census had a  14 population of 78,452, it's a 9 percent increase over 1990.  15 Polk County, according to 2000 census, has a population of  16 483,924, it's a 19.4 percent increase over 1990 and Polk  17 County is now eighth in terms of population out of the 67  18 Florida counties.</p> <p>19 Osceola County has grown to 172,493. As you saw on  20 the earlier slides, it has one of the greatest rates of  21 growth in the state, just over 60 percent. Hillsborough  22 County is just under a million people now at 998,948. It's  23 a 19.8 percent increase over 1990. Hardy County has a  24 population of 26,938 according to the 2000 census. It's a  25 38.2 percent increase over 1990.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p> <p>1 you-all are conducting around the state and we appreciate  2 that. We appreciate the fact that you are accessible, that  3 you are available in communities and cities of all sizes  4 and shapes. And I'm certain that it's instructive.</p> <p>5 The issues that you will hear from the men and women  6 who are here today, some of them will be categorically  7 different than what you will hear when you're in Senator  8 Campbell's district. And some of them will be identically  9 the same. And we just appreciate the opportunity that you  10 give our folks to come out and have their say and that's  11 what this process is all about.</p> <p>12 I'm very fortunate to have an outstanding district and  13 I would just ask that as you are evaluating communities of  14 interest that you would, to the extent that you can in a  15 very complicated process, strive to maintain the integrity  16 of interior Florida as the issues of the interior are  17 substantially different than the coast. And as easy as it  18 would be to connect the interior to coastal areas, I think  19 there is some outstanding reasons why protecting some  20 homogenous areas along the ridge and throughout the  21 interior of Florida will be helpful. But the folks who are  22 behind me have an awful lot more important things to say to  23 you and they are the ones who are the purpose of this  24 hearing.</p> <p>25 I'm honored to take the concerns of the state of</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p> <p>1 Florida to Washington. I hope that we continue to have the  2 type of dialog you enjoined in the past on issues important  3 to Florida. And, again, welcome to Polk County,  4 Mr. Chairman.</p> <p>5 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you, Congressman Putnam. Now we  6 will move into the public testimony portion of the meeting.  7 If you signed up to testify, you will notice in the bottom  8 right-hand corner of your appearance card there is a  9 number. So we will simply call people forward by their  10 number beginning with Number 1. So would speaker Number 1  11 please come forward and we will recognize you for four  12 minutes of public testimony.</p> <p>13 MR. LONG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, ladies and  14 gentlemen of the state of Florida redistricting, and our  15 local officials. I want to thank you first for bringing  16 the process of redistricting out of the political closet.  17 After the 1992 redistricting most of us in Florida were  18 confused and in the dark about the reasons, the players and  19 the process of redistricting at the price of what was  20 believed to be an incompetent, spiteful, and malicious  21 process.</p> <p>22 At great taxpayer expense, the Courts eventually had  23 to sort out the plethora of personal agenda, political  24 gerrymandering and the numerous violations of ethics,  25 decency, and great damage to Florida's political sunshine.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p> <p>1 data indicates we have in excess of 50,000 people living at  2 the intersection of those four counties. Commissioner  3 Bruce Parker in Polk County recently denied that there were  4 two population districts in just the Polk County portions  5 of the four comers and they represent a larger city then  6 every city in Polk County except Lakeland and Winter Haven  7 and that's one of the four counties in which we reside.</p> <p>8 The location of new legislative districts, should you  9 be moving them around, can do a great deal to bring us  10 together as a community and let us develop an identify and  11 a sense of home and a community spirit which is lacking  12 now. Please consider us as something other than a pin on a  13 map, a place where districts end and begin, and a place  14 where regions start and finish. Again, I thank you for  15 bringing this process out of closet to the people and  16 allowing us at least in a little way to participate. Thank  17 you.</p> <p>18 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Speaker Number 2. Welcome  19 to the committee.</p> <p>20 MR. WILSON: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, and ladies and  21 gentlemen of the Senate and the House, and the state of  22 Florida, thank you for this opportunity. My name is Jerry  23 Wilson. I'm director of administration of First  24 Presbyterian Church in Lakeland. I also serve as program  25 chairman for the Republican Club of Lakeland. And I serve</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p> <p>1 The current district maps seem to be a reflection of that  2 unfortunate process.</p> <p>3 Northeast Polk County where I live is a hodgepodge of  4 districts that seem to be drawn to favor the reelection  5 campaigns of certain politicians. I live at the  6 intersection of Polk, Orange, Osceola, and Lake Counties.  7 If I walk out my front door to the end of the street and  8 cross that street, I enter a different legislative  9 district. If I turn left at the end of that property, I am  10 in another legislative district. If I do a 180-degree turn  11 and walk for just a few minutes, I enter yet another.</p> <p>12 Currently we're in four legislative districts, 41, 44,  13 64, and 65. Our community which has been called a  14 community of interest is in four Senate districts, 10, 11,  15 14, and 17. And then we are in four congressional  16 districts, 6, 8, 12, and 15. This all occurs with 21  17 county commissioners to deal with. Now when you look at a  18 map you see four dotted lines that represent the beginning  19 and the end of political territory. When we who live in  20 northeast Polk County look at that map we see our home and  21 we're trying to build and found a community. And it's very  22 difficult when we can't reach out across the street or down  23 the street and be reaching out to the same public officials  24 and we ask you please to address that.</p> <p>25 We've had dynamic growth. I think the latest census</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p> <p>1 as a member of the Polk County Republican Executive  2 Committee.</p> <p>3 Let me first say I don't envy you, your job. There  4 are many people who want to use this system to gain an  5 advantage and there are so many pressure groups who are  6 vying for attention and special privilege. My challenge to  7 the committee is to put the interest of the state of  8 Florida and its citizens ahead of personal and special  9 interest. Take a long look at how the Democrats  10 strategized and schemed to maximize their advantage through  11 redistricting in '92 with Republicans holding substantial  12 leads and substantial advantages in the House and the  13 Senate. What we'd have to conclude, at least for '92, that  14 process was a dismal failure.</p> <p>15 Ladies and gentlemen, whether you are a Republican or  16 a Democrat, if you want to get people elected, you must  17 develop and present candidates who are qualified, who have  18 integrity and who will make decisions based on the  19 long-term interest of the state and the people of the  20 state. We need candidates who understand what it means to  21 provide leadership in a representative republic. We need  22 candidates who will subordinate self-interest and do the  23 right thing without depending on daily polls to make  24 decisions.</p> <p>25 I would like to challenge my fellow Republicans to</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p> <p>1 resist the temptation to defeat the other party by drawing  2 lines on a map. Let's take the high road. Let's show the  3 people of Florida that there is a difference. Give  4 communities priority over personal interest. Consider city  5 and county boundaries more important than special interest  6 groups. Concentrate on getting candidates elected through  7 qualifications, their integrity, and their proven ability  8 as leaders rather than by drawing lines on a piece of  9 paper. I thank you very much.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 3. Speaker  11 Number 3.</p> <p>12 MR. BROWN: Good afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  13 I would also like to also say thank you to Senator John  14 Laurent for bringing this to Lakeland. Having stated that,  15 my name is Don Brown and I'm president of the Lakeland  16 branch NAACP. I'm here to simply say I appreciate  17 politicians on the one hand. On the other hand, I have  18 some reservations. Now as the speaker before me pointed  19 out, the party affiliation and what we should be doing or  20 should not be doing, as a representative of minority  21 groups, and that's what we say the NAACP is about, I wish  22 that we would recognize the fact that when we draw our  23 lines that we do not have any stacking, any fracturing or  24 packing.</p> <p>25 When we do our lines, and I want to make it perfectly</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p> <p>1 Kathleen area should be backwood Polk. Right now it's  2 separated out. We had part of north Polk County going into  3 another county. Polk County used to dominate two Senate  4 seats until 1992. And we would like to do that again if  5 possible. And Polk should also continue to dominate the  6 congressional district that we have now.</p> <p>7 If you go back ten years ago, the current lines the  8 way they have been drawn are really kind of crazy due to  9 the gerrymandering that took place. And when you do sit  10 down to make decisions to redraw the boundaries, you've got  11 to take into account the population centers of Lakeland.  12 You have Winter Haven, Auburndale, and Lake Alfred in the  13 center part of the county. We have the ridge. And as John  14 Long brought out earlier, the four comers area. That is  15 definitely an area that needs to be dealt with and they  16 need to be represented by one person if possible, might not  17 be able to do just one but we should be able to do better  18 than 17 or whatever county commissioners and all the number  19 of other representatives.</p> <p>20 And we also have some commonalities in Polk County,  21 Bartow, Ft. Meade, they are similar populations, similar  22 shopping, business needs and medical needs with Wauchula  23 and Bowling Green. We tend to have some of the population  24 there that go to Polk County for various shopping needs.  25 Same with Lake Wales, Frostproof, Avon Park, along the 27</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p> <p>1 clear, that we want some representation of all people and  2 not exclude that one vote that really counts. We know what  3 we've just gone through recently and we don't want to see  4 the same thing perpetuated by the drawing of lines and not  5 really looking at all of Florida's voters and making  6 certain that all of us have a say-so in who our elected  7 officials are and not have things drawn in such a manner  8 where we really do not have a real voice or a real vote as  9 the Constitution so guarantees. Keep that in mind as we  10 draw our lines and I will always respect you but I will  11 always be vigilant. Thank you.</p> <p>12 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 4. Speaker  13 Number 4.</p> <p>14 MR. CARTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ladies and  15 gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives, my  16 name is Jerry Carter. I reside in Winter Haven and had a  17 great display of the demographics of the county but I want  18 to expand on it just a little bit. Polk County is the  19 fourth largest county in Florida. It's larger than the  20 state of Rhode Island. Seventeen municipalities, cities  21 and towns spread out throughout the county. And the  22 population, as was mentioned earlier, is over 480,000  23 people.</p> <p>24 And I'd like to mention that we should continue to  25 dominate the four House seats in Polk County and the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p> <p>1 corridor which is a major population growth area. With  2 that, I'd like to say thank you for traveling to every part  3 of Polk County and listening to the people before you  4 started drawing your new boundary lines. And thanks and  5 welcome to Polk County.</p> <p>6 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 5. Welcome.</p> <p>7 MR. PLUMLEE: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for  8 coming to Polk County. I apologize, I don't have my coat  9 and tie but I was out delivering hot lunches to the senior  10 citizens this morning. A coat and tie is a little  11 uncomfortable for that job.</p> <p>12 What I'd like to address is the compactness issue and  13 also that this is the first opportunity in modern times  14 that this group has had the privilege and honor of working  15 on the redistricting and it would be a good time to  16 eliminate some of the gerrymandering that has areas that  17 run from Jacksonville to Orlando for instance which is --  18 the St. Johns River does that but I don't believe the  19 Legislature was designed to do that.</p> <p>20 I want to address such issues as compactness, county  21 lines, and communities of interest in our area and thoughts  22 as to whether counties and cities should be split or  23 maintained in communities locked together with other  24 communities that have common interests. Paula Dockery, for  25 instance, has done a great job for Lakeland but she only</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p> <p>1 has part of Lakeland. Our city is split in two or three  2 different ways in the Senate area. John Laurent in Bartow  3 probably doesn't have a lot of interest on the west coast  4 of Florida. So that could probably be rearranged a bit and  5 make for a more workable situation. I believe that the  6 current Legislature is making this a more open process for  7 the public than was done ten years ago and look forward to  8 see the results of that. Thank you very much.</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 6. Number 6.</p> <p>10 MR. ENGLISH: Good afternoon, Chairman, ladies and  11 gentlemen. I appreciate the opportunity to be here. My  12 name is Bob English and I'm a manufacturer and I live in  13 Lakeland. Going back to the increase in population of Polk  14 County, that 19 percent translates into 78,542 people and I  15 think that's enough of an increase in population to justify  16 another Senate district in Polk County.</p> <p>17 In regards to the House, Polk County is spread over  18 1700 square miles and I think that's a big enough county to  19 have all our House districts located within the boundaries  20 of Polk County. I think it would be very efficient and  21 less confusing to the residents of Polk County if the House  22 districts worked in concert or were similar in geography to  23 the county commission districts. That way each constituent  24 would have within the borders of Polk County his State  25 Representative, his Senate Representative and his County</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p> <p>1 citizen in Polk County can purchase that and they may go  2 and see the maps for themselves. They can even make  3 suggestions and send it to you and that's a long and far  4 cry from ten years ago when pretty much the majority party  5 is the one who had access to the computers and to what was  6 being proposed.</p> <p>7 And if you did want to get the software, if you could  8 cough up about \$100,000 or so, you know, you could come and  9 get it. I don't know that most of the average citizens  10 would be able to do that and that's a big deal. I think  11 we've come a long way in ten years.</p> <p>12 I would also like to challenge you, this committee, to  13 continue to make this process open. Many people talked  14 about today having a common sense approach to the way the  15 lines are drawn. In 1992 I lived in Bartow and my State  16 Representative at that time was John Laurent who is now my  17 State Senator. But he was actually drawn out of our area.  18 Now Bartow is his hometown, obviously his base. And he was  19 given a district that stretched all the way from, I believe  20 it was from the Kissimmee River all the way down to Apollo  21 Beach in Hillsborough County. Some of those areas are very  22 long and narrow and have very few people living in them.  23 And thankfully he was reelected because he is such a great  24 legislator and he really did care about the people and he  25 made sure the people in those other areas knew him.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p> <p>1 Representative.</p> <p>2 And looking at the interest of Polk County, I think we  3 should look at the districts in regard to the composition  4 of the constituents. For example, in District 63 I think  5 that should represent the urban segment of our population.  6 And I think 66, District 66, should represent the  7 agricultural and rural areas rather than having them  8 intermixed. As far as the U.S. Congressional District 12  9 is concerned, I would hope that would remain unchanged.  10 Thank you so much.</p> <p>11 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you, sir. Number 7. Welcome to  12 the public hearing.</p> <p>13 MS. ELY: Thank you. My name is Twyla Ely. I was  14 just making notes and I have like three pages. But I  15 promise I won't take long. I know people that know me are  16 surprised I have that many notes. I did want to thank you  17 for making a stop in Polk County, it's very important. And  18 I know that Senator Laurent had a big part in that and we  19 appreciate him doing it.</p> <p>20 I also want to compliment the committees here for the  21 open way you've had the redistricting hearings and  22 everything that you've made available, the maps on site and  23 the web pages to help us. I also want to mention, which a  24 lot of people may not realize this, that you can actually  25 go in and get the software for \$20, anyone, any party, any</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 29</p> <p>1 But if you look at that seat which is now State  2 Representative JD Alexander's seat, there's not any common  3 sense approach to it. There was one reason those lines  4 were drawn was for him to be drawn out of his home base and  5 I would like to urge these committees to make sure that  6 does not happen. I'm not against having more than one  7 Representative in our area or even more than one Senator  8 because I feel that gives us more power in Polk to go and  9 talk to more legislators. But I do want to ask that you  10 try to keep some kind of common sense to that approach.  11 Thank you.</p> <p>12 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 8.</p> <p>13 MR. SENFT: I think you've had enough welcomes and we  14 are sincere and we're glad to have you here. My name is  15 Paul Senft from Heathrow, Florida, Haines City, which is on  16 top of the bridge, downhill from the coast. We have -- I  17 had some experience with the redistricting ten years ago  18 and I'd like to echo what Twyla said and commend you for  19 the openness of the process and making software available  20 and all of that so that people can participate.</p> <p>21 I'm glad you don't have any maps for us as well  22 because you're doing it the right way. You're getting the  23 input first before you present presumptuously maps before  24 people have had a chance to speak. So thank you for that  25 as well. I do hope that we can achieve some compactness in</p>



<p style="text-align: right;">Page 30</p> <p>1 some of the districts having run in '92 and '94. The seat  2 now held by Marty Bowen, it's about 70 miles from tip to  3 tip and there's a lot of space in between. And Polk County  4 has filled in a lot in between.</p> <p>5 If you'll look at some numbers, Polk County's  6 population of 483, if you add the group of people, the  7 voters in the four corners' area, if you'll just picture  8 north, south, east west in your mind, you go on north on  9 Highway 27 to the four corner's area that one of the  10 previous speakers was addressing, you pick up about 50,000  11 there. Highlands County to the south is about 87,000. On  12 the Osceola line, Poinciana has quite a few. Senator  13 Webster used to share that Poinciana area in his House  14 district I believe.</p> <p>15 And the other area in between is the Celebration area  16 that Disney is building that is a rapidly-growing area.  17 With all of that, you could probably nest the two Senate  18 seats for Polk. And there is no question you can nest  19 under those two Senate seats the four House seats for Polk  20 County. So I'll hope you'll give that some consideration.</p> <p>21 I know occasionally you hear nothing but complaints  22 but I'd like to commend you for a few other things. You're  23 having just as many hearings as were held in '91, or very  24 close to the same number. So thank you for that. The  25 process is being equal as far as access. Also, you're</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 32</p> <p>1 Polk Counties lead the state in the total number with farms  2 in Hillsborough, 2639 and Polk at 2464.</p> <p>3 Polk has retained its agricultural integrity because  4 redistricting decisions make -- decision-makers in the past  5 have matched it with the agriculture areas of adjoining  6 counties. They have taken into consideration the  7 importance of agriculture to the local economies of these  8 counties and they recognize that officials elected to  9 represent these areas do a better job when counties in  10 their districts are linked to other nearby counties with  11 similar economic dynamics.</p> <p>12 I'm here today to address that Polk's number one  13 industry to remain strong it must continue to be fair with  14 areas of adjacent counties that have like agriculture  15 interests. Therefore it would be in Polk's best interest  16 if it returns to two State Senate seats and maintain its  17 current State House and Congressional representation of  18 primarily four State House seats and one Congressional  19 seat. Currently Polk's predominantly agricultural areas  20 are represented very well by Florida's State Senator John  21 Laurent, Florida Representatives JD Alexander, Marty Bowen,  22 Paula Dockery, and Dennis Ross and Congressman Adam Putnam.</p> <p>23 The job of these elected representatives has been made  24 easier because more than population growth was being taken  25 into account when Polk's districts were planned in the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 31</p> <p>1 getting, as I said, the input first before you present any  2 maps and you're making it open. Some may have criticized  3 that there are not any standards by which to draw these  4 districts, but we had a very good presentation by the  5 lawyers that the Constitution and the judges will provide  6 guidelines for us and I'm sure you are all well aware of  7 that.</p> <p>8 So without belaboring it any further, again thank you  9 for coming to Polk. And I commend you for the openness and  10 the way you are conducting the process. We are very proud  11 of our Polk County delegation and their participation and  12 leadership and hope you'll keep your ears open to what they  13 have to say because we'll be bending their ears.</p> <p>14 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 9.</p> <p>15 MR. SULLIVAN: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen of  16 the committee, and Mr. Chairman. We do appreciate this  17 opportunity. I am Paul Sullivan, cattle rancher and citrus  18 grower from the area of Polk County and vice president of  19 the Polk County Farm Bureau.</p> <p>20 I've been a farmer in Polk County all of my adult life  21 and I've watched Polk's population grow and urban  22 landscapes change. Despite these developments the  23 production in sale of food and fiber remains Polk's largest  24 industry. It generates 4.2 billion in annual economic  25 impact and provides nearly 35,000 jobs. Hillsborough and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p> <p>1 past. Please take the agricultural strength in Polk County  2 into consideration when you make your redistricting  3 decisions. Again, thank you for this opportunity.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 10.</p> <p>5 MR. STEARNS: Good afternoon, gentlemen -- ladies and  6 gentlemen, I'm sorry. I'm Dave Stearns. I'm vice  7 president of the state organization of manufactured home  8 owners or often known as the FMO. We wanted to thank you  9 for recognizing Polk County. I have an argument, somebody  10 said it's the fourth biggest county. I think for a county  11 in -- we're the second biggest county in Florida. It's  12 interesting to note that over in Tampa yesterday, which is  13 one of the most populous counties, they had a meeting room  14 in the county headquarters that was about half this size.</p> <p>15 So Polk County may not have everything, but we've got  16 a much bigger committee meeting room than they do in Tampa.  17 Particularly interesting to note from one of the previous  18 speakers, after you leave Haines City, I wanted to ask our  19 newest representative, Marty, is it true from Haines City  20 everything in Florida is downhill after that? It's  21 interesting to know.</p> <p>22 We have no argument with -- we know you are people and  23 men and women of high ideals and integrity and character  24 and you're going to do a good job for all the people of  25 Florida. We don't want anything special. We think Polk</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 34</p> <p>1 County presently has a pretty good arrangement. We have  2 four very fine Representatives in the House. We have one  3 of the senior members of the Senate with us as lead  4 chairman and we're proud of the things that you've  5 accomplished in the last session. You did some positive  6 things and we're proud of that.  7 My colleague Stew Willson is going to mention a few  8 details. I think the only thing I know of that we might do  9 a little better, we're happy with the Congressional  10 redistricting and we are happy with the House. We think  11 there might be a little adjustment with Ginny Brown-Waite's  12 district where you gained population at a much faster rate  13 than the southern part of Polk. You may have to give up  14 some of that area to us. Maybe cut the line off across  15 Polk County toward the north. Other than that, thank you  16 very much for bringing your delegation and your study here  17 to Polk and we thank you again for being here.  18 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Number 11.  19 MS. HARDEN: Good afternoon. Mr. Chairman, and  20 members of the redistricting committee, my name is Jean  21 Harden and I'm a resident of Lakeland. I live in Senator  22 Laurent's district and Representative Ross' district and I  23 appreciate the opportunity to speak.  24 It's my belief that we in Polk County and in Florida  25 can best be served by Congressional districts, Senate, and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 36</p> <p>1 I would note however, that this hearing like the vast  2 majority of your hearings is being held during the middle  3 of the workday when it is not convenient for those who are  4 working to attend. I had to use my annual leave time in  5 order to be here. Further, I'm lucky that this hearing is  6 being -- taking place in Polk County. AFSME has many  7 members and public employees and workers who are in  8 Brevard, Seminole, Hernando, and according to the map,  9 Sumpter with number two growth as well as Pasco County, and  10 they are not even having access to the public hearing  11 process which is quite unfortunate.  12 I would ask that as this process moves forward, you  13 strive to make it more open and more accessible and that  14 all information is easily available to the public. Post  15 all information on the web site we saw displayed earlier.  16 But also update the web site. As of this morning before I  17 began work it said the Lakeland hearing was to be announced  18 for a location. We found it anyway.  19 I'm also concerned that the most accurate census data  20 to use during the redistricting process, news reports  21 indicate that over 200,000 Floridians were missed by the  22 2000 census and we know that minority groups are  23 disproportionately represented in this undercount. Since  24 Florida was one of only four states to not provide precinct  25 level data to the census bureau, I would suggest that to</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 35</p> <p>1 House districts that are contiguous and compact and that do  2 represent the integrity of counties and communities. But  3 my question to this committee is how do we define the  4 community of interest? As we have seen by the census  5 numbers, we've had tremendous growth in Polk County.  6 Perhaps our community of interest has expanded to include  7 more than agriculture.  8 The redistricting process should not be used to  9 advance the political aspirations of any individual or to  10 protect incumbency. I hope that the results of this  11 redistricting process won't repeat the mistakes of the last  12 redistricting. Believe me, there was enough blame to go  13 around on both sides of the aisle for that disaster.  14 Again, I do appreciate the fact that the committee came to  15 Lakeland, came to Polk County. It isn't often that a  16 letter that I write to the Legislature gets quite such a  17 prompt response. Thank you.  18 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Number 12. Welcome to the hearing.  19 MS. NEILSEN: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair, and members  20 of the committee. My name is Fran Neilsen. I live in  21 Representative Byrd's district in Plant City and I'm a  22 member of the American Federation of State, County and  23 Municipal Employees. As such, I'm a political chair for 28  24 counties here in west central Florida. I want to thank the  25 committee for holding this public hearing.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p> <p>1 compensate for those possible attendant problems the  2 Legislature consider utilizing adjusted census data which  3 is the most representative of minority populations.  4 This hearing is being held in Congressional  5 District 12, my congressional district, a district that  6 encompasses parts of five counties. Most of which have  7 received phenomenal growth according to what we saw  8 earlier. I would ask that as you redraw the lines that you  9 try to respect county lines. And as much as possible,  10 limit the number of counties that comprise a single  11 district. I think that would also make Congressman Adam  12 Putnam quite happy.  13 Similarly, the current makeup of Congressional  14 District 11 respect such lines by being contained solely  15 within Hillsborough County and by meeting the test of  16 contiguousness and compactness. I would urge you to keep  17 these basic communities of interest together in  18 Congressional District 11 by ensuring that downtown Tampa  19 remains intact and within the district. And that in  20 redrawing any lines this district stays within Hillsborough  21 County.  22 The incumbent Congressman Jim Davis has done an  23 excellent job representing his diverse communities that  24 make up District 11. The current makeup of that district  25 is in Tampa and communities have had representation that</p>

1 reflects their interests. My property line along  
 2 District 62 is the boundary line. My front yard is in  
 3 Representative Byrd's district. My backyard is in  
 4 Representative Littlefield's. On Friday Representative  
 5 Byrd and I attended a function in Plant City at the Boys'  
 6 and Girls' Club where Verizon presented \$25,000 worth of  
 7 computer equipment to the Boys' and Girls' Club. That's  
 8 not Representative Byrd's district. Representative Byrd  
 9 represents that area anyway as an in-kind contribution.

10 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Your time has expired.

11 MS. NEILSEN: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you for coming. Number 13.

13 MR. WILLSON: Good afternoon. Mr. Chairman, members  
 14 of the committee, and particularly members of the Polk  
 15 delegation, I wish to thank you for coming over to Polk  
 16 County and giving us this opportunity to speak to you.  
 17 First I would like to ask pardon for not having a tie on.  
 18 I was thinking, I've been retired for 18 years. And when  
 19 you arrive at that point you may agree with me it is more  
 20 comfortable without one.

21 We, on my part, have been extremely satisfied with the  
 22 representation that we have had from our representatives in  
 23 Polk County. And also I notice Adam is gone now but from  
 24 our Congressman. So I'd like to start by urging you to  
 25 maintain the Congressional district which Adam Putnam

1 represents.

2 Secondly, I see no reason whatsoever to change the  
 3 districts that we have now with our Florida  
 4 Representatives. As mentioned earlier, there is one small  
 5 point. It is extremely convenient where possible to have  
 6 the local offices of the Representative or Senator as close  
 7 as possible to the constituents. And I know you have many,  
 8 many other elements to consider. But among them, please  
 9 consider the availability of the local office, of the  
 10 politician to the constituents.

11 In my case, I am quite close in Winter Haven to  
 12 Senator Laurent's office. But my dear Senator Ginny  
 13 Brown-Waite who we dearly love is way off in Brooksville.  
 14 It is not convenient to drive over to Brooksville. It's  
 15 very convenient to drive over to Marty Bowen's office which  
 16 I have done. So please add that as one element of  
 17 consideration into your very, very difficult task. Best  
 18 wishes.

19 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Number 14.

20 MS. MANN: Good afternoon, members of the committee.  
 21 I'm Joan Mann, a small business owner. And my  
 22 congratulations on the openness of these meetings. It's  
 23 well needed and I trust that some of our ideas will be  
 24 used, we certainly hope so. I'm from north Polk County,  
 25 one-quarter mile north of I-4. I have Representatives in

1 Brooksville, one in Melbourne. There is something wrong  
 2 with that map. I'd like to see that changed. You know  
 3 what you have to do. We ask only that your consideration  
 4 in drawing lines don't break apart common interests and  
 5 community. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 15.

7 MR. MARTIN: Hi, I'm Ron Martin. I'm vice chair of  
 8 the Democratic party. I'd like to thank you for coming  
 9 today and give us citizens a chance to speak about how we  
 10 feel about redistricting. I'm not happy about your  
 11 committee seems to be unconcerned about getting everyone's  
 12 comments. At first you scheduled no public hearing in Polk  
 13 County -- the nearest one was in Hardy County September the  
 14 20th at 10:00 a.m. -- until you received complaint letters,  
 15 but still even today you haven't given the public enough  
 16 time, only five days' notice, at 1:30 p.m.

17 Why did you decide to hold it at this time of the day?  
 18 Were you truly wanting all the public's comments or would  
 19 you have held -- why didn't you hold this public hearing at  
 20 7:00 p.m. in the evening? I'm a little nervous as you can  
 21 tell. But second, Polk County has a large prison  
 22 population with several private and public ones located in  
 23 large counties. Are you going to count them into your  
 24 population growth in the 2000 census for Polk County even  
 25 though they have no vote? Shouldn't they be included in

1 the redistricting process? What happens to the Equal  
 2 Protection Clause in the Federal Constitution that is found  
 3 in Section 1 of the 14th Amendment stating, No state shall  
 4 deny any person with its jurisdiction the equal protection  
 5 of the laws? Does this apply to the prison population when  
 6 it comes to redistricting?

7 Third, I would like to go on record by asking this  
 8 committee one important question today. Do you have any  
 9 maps already redrawn? Because when you get through holding  
 10 the public hearings and maps are ready for approval, the  
 11 public would like a chance to look at them before the  
 12 Governor signs off on them. Please put them on the  
 13 Internet so everyone has a chance to comment. Please  
 14 respond to the above questions in writing as soon as  
 15 possible. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you.

17 MS. BLACK: Good afternoon. My name is Laura Lee  
 18 Black and I'm a constituent of District 44. I'm from  
 19 Lakeland but our district is representative of Lake, Polk,  
 20 Hernando, and Sumpter Counties. My feeling is I live in  
 21 the northwest corridor of Polk County. When you live -- I  
 22 live only 6 miles from Pasco County but my life and my  
 23 community interest is in Lakeland. As a cattle raiser and  
 24 citrus grower, I am more susceptible to the Polk County  
 25 interest and I'd like to be a part of that delegation. I

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p> <p>1 feel as a 21-year old and a young voter that you need to  2 take into consideration when redesigning districts that --  3 keep counties together. Like people 5 miles away from here  4 in Paula Dockery's district but we're in Representative  5 Dave Russell's. It's important that you keep common issues  6 together when you're doing this. As far as the Senate,  7 we're fine with the two seats. And the Congressional  8 district of 12 we're fine with, but we would like to be a  9 part of District 65. Thank you.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 17.</p> <p>11 MR. HARPER: Mr. Chairman, and the committee, I'm Alex  12 Harper, Sr., president of the Polk County Democratic Black  13 Caucus. I will follow the trend of the others in saying  14 thank you for allowing us this opportunity to participate  15 or to be heard in this committee. However, I am profoundly  16 disappointed that you scheduled this meeting at this hour  17 because many of the working population are unable to  18 participate in this meeting this afternoon. It is  19 extremely important that all citizens have the opportunity  20 to participate in this type of meetings because  21 redistricting is extremely important to all of us.</p> <p>22 Also, I would like to mention the fact that I am  23 deeply and passionately concerned that you do not lump all  24 the minorities, especially blacks, into one district where  25 they will not be able to participate along the lines of</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p> <p>1 We support the acknowledged principles of fair  2 redistricting that is compactness, contiguousness,  3 protection of communities of interest, regard for political  4 subdivisions and we support the Legislature's stated goal  5 of including the public in the process of redistricting.  6 You have taken a step in the right direction to include  7 Lakeland in the list of hearing sites. Please continue the  8 process.</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Number 19.</p> <p>10 MR. WIGGS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and esteemed  11 members of this delegation. I'm Howard Wiggs. I'm a  12 business owner in Lakeland along with my wife, and except  13 for a few months, a lifelong resident of Polk County. I  14 mean no disrespect to any of the representatives who  15 represent a portion of Polk County but who do not live in  16 Polk County. However, I do not believe that it's necessary  17 for Polk County to be carved up and portions of it placed  18 in other districts. As you know, Polk County is a large  19 county geographically and it's rich in its political  20 heritage with leaders like Spencer Holland and Lawton  21 Chiles, as well as many others including our current Polk  22 County delegation.</p> <p>23 There are a number of initiatives currently taking  24 place in Polk County that are intended to bring folks  25 together to build a sense of community across our county.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p> <p>1 voting for other good candidates. In the last  2 redistricting seat, many of them was lumped into the same  3 district meaning they were unable to participate and vote  4 for other candidates or be represented by other candidates.</p> <p>5 Without prolonging the time, I would challenge this  6 group to be fair and use good common sense in drawing the  7 maps because we realize that all our citizens need the  8 opportunity to participate and be treated fairly in the  9 process. Again, thank you for this opportunity.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 18.</p> <p>11 MS. BECKER: Good afternoon. My name is Sharon  12 Becker. I'm the Chair of the DEC. First of all, I would  13 like to take this opportunity to thank you, members of the  14 committee, for the addition of Lakeland to this hearing.  15 Those of us who live in Polk County appreciate the  16 recognition and the opportunity to testify. We applaud  17 your commitment to open government and the adherence to  18 sunshine laws of the sunshine state.</p> <p>19 We only wish this session had been held in the evening  20 so people did not have to take off work in order to  21 testify. We hope that you plan to continue your commitment  22 to open hearings by allowing us to comment on the final  23 maps before they are enacted. We also would like to see  24 those maps taken outside of Tallahassee as these hearings  25 were.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p> <p>1 I believe it's counterproductive for our county and the  2 efforts that we're undertaking to have portions of it  3 broken off and attached to other districts.</p> <p>4 My request is simple, when you are drawing the  5 district lines return to us the political integrity that we  6 believe Polk County deserves. As far as possible preserve  7 the boundaries of Polk County and not for the sake of  8 tradition but for the sake of our citizens. Thank you.</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 20. Welcome to the  10 committee.</p> <p>11 MS. LUSSIER: Audrey Lussier. I teach at Mulberry  12 High School. This is my 30th year there. I grew up in  13 east Hillsborough County and I too am here to ask you not  14 to divide Polk County. We do not want to be treated as  15 unwanted stepchildren.</p> <p>16 I believe the process of politically dividing us  17 contributes to turning off citizen participation. It  18 creates confusion so they do not know who to see when they  19 need help or who to see when they wish to contribute. Some  20 of us even have to call long-distance to reach our  21 Representatives. I believe this creates a system of haves  22 and have-nots.</p> <p>23 After 30 years in Mulberry and living in east  24 Hillsborough County, I have always lived in an area that  25 has been carved up and treated like a stepchild. I'm in an</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p> <p>1 area in Willow Oak that sometimes goes one way, sometimes  2 another. And when I lived in Dover, the same thing  3 happened. I too ask that you draw the lines so that the  4 people come first, not the politicians, not the special  5 interests. Thank you.</p> <p>6 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Number 21. Former Representative  7 Edwards.</p> <p>8 MS. EDWARDS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members.  9 I'm Lori Edwards. I'm the supervisor of elections for Polk  10 County. By the time you're done with this far-reaching  11 tour, you will hear the voice of Florida's minority groups,  12 majority groups and local leaders. And I have every  13 confidence that you'll arrive at a fair plan with compact,  14 congruent districts that represent communities of interest.  15 Once that plan is adopted, however, the mechanics of  16 Florida's democracy kicks in.</p> <p>17 As a result of presidential election 2000, we're all  18 all too familiar with the mechanics of Florida's democracy.  19 But I bring it up to thank you for your meaningful election  20 reform legislation that you passed last session and  21 especially the financial commitment that you made to local  22 governments, counties, money for voting equipment and money  23 to educate the voters. Here in Polk County when you  24 finally hand over the plan, the district -- the boundaries  25 of ten districts will change. Meanwhile, back at the ranch</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p> <p>1 with your constituents in the newsletters and web sites if  2 you would go out of your way to keep updated precinct and  3 redistricting information available to your constituents,  4 it would make it a lot -- we truly have a shared interest  5 here.</p> <p>6 And to that end, I'd also like to offer the supervisor  7 of elections' office to help your staff because there will  8 be increased constituent inquiries as we approach election  9 day. I wish you the best of luck. I understand you have a  10 very complex task. And like the others today, I want to  11 thank you very much for coming to Polk County.</p> <p>12 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 22.</p> <p>13 MR. LEE: I'm Dr. Earl Lee and I'm here on behalf of  14 tge Greater Haines City Area Chamber of Commerce. I'm on  15 the board and chair the Government Affairs Committee. We  16 have submitted a written handout which you will be getting.  17 It's been fairly short notice, but let me say this in  18 defense of the committee. I realize you can't speak for  19 yourself here today because of the time frame. But for  20 those who have expressed concerns over the fact that the  21 meeting is here in the middle of the day, I would remind  22 people that we are in the technological age and E-mail is  23 available and you made it available for comments as well as  24 the snail mail that is still available. So we can  25 participate in the process on an ongoing basis and I</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p> <p>1 the county commission and the school board will be changing  2 the boundaries of another ten districts. The results are  3 likely to affect more than 100 of our 165 precincts, all  4 1300 poll workers and probably about 200,000 of our 250,000  5 voters here.</p> <p>6 I'm here to ask your consideration on two fronts.  7 One, do a good job but please do it quickly. The time line  8 that you've presented here today allows us just six weeks  9 to implement the plan that you're going to put in place.  10 And the statistics I gave you was for one of Florida's 67  11 counties.</p> <p>12 And second, please respect city limit boundaries  13 because as supervisor and with the help of the county  14 commission, I can go in and change precinct boundaries.  15 Those city boundaries are not going to budge. And finally  16 for the Polk delegation, I have a special request. The  17 voting habits of Polk residents are going to be adjusted as  18 these precinct lines change. I'll be using the bulk of the  19 education funding that you're sending down our way in the  20 time frame between the receipt of that map and election day  21 to keep voters aware and informed of the changes ahead of  22 time so that they know where to go on election day.</p> <p>23 I'm going to ask your assistance from the Polk  24 legislative delegation from your district offices. Next  25 year around this time when you're having communications</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 49</p> <p>1 appreciate you making it available -- making it available  2 that way. I'm not -- personally, I'm not appreciative of  3 the people who have denigrated the committee. And so I  4 just thought I would make that statement.</p> <p>5 We have some concerns in polling some of our over 500  6 members of the Chamber of Commerce in regards to  7 redistricting. One of the areas of concern is the area of  8 Poinciana, Florida. And we realize when it comes to county  9 government and so on, we can't split it. But a very small  10 portion of Poinciana is in Polk County. The bulk of  11 everything else in Poinciana is in Osceola County. And I  12 think in Federal districts and probably in some of our  13 State legislative as well as Senatorial districts, it would  14 best serve that population if they could be put together as  15 a community rather than separate it as they are now. We'll  16 have to continue to live with two sheriffs and who's got  17 jurisdiction where. That we can't avoid unless we redo the  18 county line.</p> <p>19 Congressionally, we have a small portion of northeast  20 Polk County that is in Representative Dave Weldon's  21 district. That's really a travesty that just a handful of  22 people both to Dave Weldon as well as to the people though  23 he does a good job of representing them that should come  24 back into Polk County and hopefully back into Adam Putnam's  25 district because he covers the rest of the area up there.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 50</p> <p>1 When it comes to State Senatorial districts as well as  2 to the State Representative districts, when you take a  3 portion of rural Polk County and you attach it to a  4 district outside of Polk County, the people in that rural  5 population do not have much of a voice because it's very  6 difficult for them to attach themselves to the city north  7 of them or whatever. And we feel it would be best to leave  8 the rural portions of Polk County in Polk County districts.  9 And if you need to attach in the dividing, take a chunk --  10 take a city or take a larger portion that's right adjacent  11 and attach it to both of those areas.</p> <p>12 Would remind you that in Polk County the growth in  13 Polk County is occurring to the east. And we -- the  14 eastern side of Polk County represents more than 50 percent  15 of the population in Polk County and that pattern is well  16 established over the last four to five years. It's going  17 to continue to go that way. And this committee needs to be  18 forward looking in its redistricting that the population  19 growth is going that way when you consider carving up Polk  20 County.</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Ten seconds.</p> <p>22 MR. LEE: Let me just close with this statement then.  23 That we trust the committee will make its decisions based  24 on statesmanship rather than political aspirations. Thank  25 you.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 52</p> <p>1 anything?</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Senator Brown-Waite?</p> <p>3 SENATOR BROWN-WAITE: My Senate district is the  4 district that many people have been concerned about that  5 adjoins Pasco County. I didn't draw it. It was not drawn  6 to be a seat that was held by the party that I belong to.  7 We have a toll free number for our district office, and  8 believe me, I go over these sheets of the constituent calls  9 and a very large number, more than about 30 percent --  10 which is higher than the percentage of my district -- of  11 the calls do come from the Polk County area, that we are  12 helping Polk County residents.</p> <p>13 So although my office is in Brooksville, number one,  14 as my mama said, she'll come talk to anybody. So anybody  15 who has asked me to come down, I come down. Again, the  16 toll free number is there, E-mail me, and we certainly have  17 adequately heard from the folks of this county and I want  18 to commend you-all for showing up today and your input was  19 very important.</p> <p>20 Believe me, in a perfect world we would keep every  21 county intact. However, there are only 40 Senate districts  22 and there are 67 counties. So some counties have to be  23 split and I certainly understand the need or the desire to  24 keep a county intact. It makes a whole lot of sense. But  25 just don't shoot this messenger because I didn't draw this</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 51</p> <p>1 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. Number 23.</p> <p>2 MR. SEMFT: Mr. Chairman, thank you. Since I didn't  3 use all my time, I had one other thing to commend you for  4 and that is for the fact that this time 36 percent of your  5 meetings are after 5:00 compared to 10 years ago when  6 someone else was controlling the process, when only 27  7 percent of the meetings were after 5:00.</p> <p>8 So I think you're doing a better job all the way  9 around. Thank you.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Now, ladies and gentlemen, that  11 concludes the public testimony but we do have the local  12 legislators who may want to address the meeting. So I'll  13 ask if any of the legislators from the local delegation  14 that would like to say -- Senator Laurent, would you like  15 to address the public hearing?</p> <p>16 SENATOR LAURENT: Well I do want to thank the Senate  17 and House reapportionment committees for rescheduling the  18 hearing in Lakeland. I know a lot of folks in Lakeland  19 felt that was important. And I particularly want to thank  20 the members who have come. But most importantly, I want to  21 thank the folks who have come to testify to today. The  22 testimony was -- most of it was on point, it was concise,  23 and I think it gives the committee and staff some points of  24 view and things to work on when we do start drawing the  25 maps. Anybody else from the local delegation like to say</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 53</p> <p>1 line.</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Representative Alexander.</p> <p>3 REPRESENTATIVE ALEXANDER: Thank you, Chairman. As  4 one of those Representatives who didn't draw the line who  5 represents portions of two counties, I certainly recognize  6 some of the difficulties of serving this population. It's  7 an hour and a half from my house to Apollo Beach. I've  8 worked hard to try to make sure I heard what Apollo Beach  9 wanted to do and tried to make sure they were well  10 represented as best you can from an hour and a half away.  11 That's not ideal.</p> <p>12 And clearly, I think as we move forward, we are going  13 to do our best to draw more compact, more reasoned  14 districts. At the same time, I would also like to remind  15 you that it's been a -- I think quite positive for Polk  16 County and for Hillsborough County, to have me represent  17 both. By being in the Hillsborough delegation I've  18 developed personal relationships working arm in arm with a  19 lot of our colleagues from Hillsborough County that helped  20 us to get things done for Hillsborough County better and it  21 also helped us get things done for Polk.</p> <p>22 And so there's an art to all this. It's hard to say  23 exactly what's perfect. But don't believe just because  24 your community happens to be split -- I represent another  25 community, Sun City, that's split in two, by two House</p>

1 districts. Those folks are very active. They are very  
 2 politically -- above 95 percent. And let me tell you, when  
 3 Sun City talks, both House members listen to them. So they  
 4 in effect have a lot to say about what their two House  
 5 members do even though their community is split.

6 So please think beyond the obvious and understand that  
 7 there are a lot of issues to try to come together on and  
 8 what's the best way to draw districts. And sometimes it's  
 9 not a perfect -- just keep it around one city. Here in  
 10 Polk County we have 485,000 people. Well, if we have four  
 11 House seats at 133,000 apiece, that's more than what Polk  
 12 County has. So if we're going to have four principally  
 13 Polk County districts, there will have to be some overlap  
 14 in order to have four. And it will be challenging.

15 I've never been involved in this and I know under our  
 16 able leadership we will do a good job. I can tell you from  
 17 brief discussions I had with my colleagues we are committed  
 18 to trying to draw compact, common sense districts as best  
 19 we can. But thanks for your time and thank you for coming  
 20 out today to speak to us.

21 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Other members? Other members? Thank  
 22 you for your hospitality and the public hearing will now be  
 23 adjourned.

24 (Hearing adjourned at 3:00 p.m.)  
 25

1 CERTIFICATE

2 STATE OF FLORIDA:

3 COUNTY OF LEON:

4 I, KRISTEN L. BENTLEY, Court Reporter, certify that I  
 5 was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing  
 6 proceedings and that the transcript is a true and complete  
 7 record of my stenographic notes.

8 DATED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2001.

9 \_\_\_\_\_  
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11 Court Reporter

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